

Appl. No. 09/778,371
Amdt Under 37 CFR § 1.116 dated February 23, 2004
Reply to Final Office Action of December 23, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-20 are pending in the present application. Claim 2 is allowed. Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 10, and 12-18 stand rejected. Claims 6, 11, 19 and 20 are objected to.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 3, 9 and 10 are canceled by this amendment. Claims 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 17 and 19 have been amended to depend from Claim 2 for consistency. Claim 14 has been amended to correct the use of English therein.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,431,622 to Pyrozyk et al. (hereafter "Pyrozyk"). Claims 1 and 3 have been canceled so the rejection thereof is moot. Claims 4, 7, and 17 have been amended to depend from Claim 2 which is allowed. Claim 18 depends from Claim 17 so it too is allowable upon entry of the amendment. Given the cancellation of claims and the amendments to Claims 4, 7, and 17, the Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 4, 7, 17 and 18 are in condition for allowance and request entry of the amendment thereto. The Applicants further respectfully request that the final rejection of Claims 4, 7, 17 and 18 over the Pyrozyk reference be withdrawn and that the claims be allowed.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,797,892 to Glaug et al. (hereafter "Glaug"). As noted above, Claims 1, 9 and 10 have been canceled by the present amendment so the rejection thereof is moot. Claims 13 and 14 depend from Claim 12 which has been amended to depend from Claim 2 which has been allowed. Given the present amendment, the Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendment and withdrawal of the final rejection of Claims 13 and 14 over the Glaug reference and that the claims be allowed.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pyrozyk. The Applicants respectfully point out that Claim 12 has been amended to depend from Claim 2 which has been allowed. Given that Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 now depend from an

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allowed claim, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection under 35 USC § 103 has been overcome and respectfully request withdrawal of the final rejection of Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 and that the claims be allowed.

CONCLUSION

The Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment is proper under 37 CFR § 1.116 (b) because it cancels claims in order to place the above-identified application in condition for allowance. Therefore, the entry thereof is respectfully requested. Given the cancellation of Claims 1, 3, 9 and 10 and the amendment of Claims 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 17 and 19, the Applicants respectfully submit that the final rejection has been overcome. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. Thus, the Applicants respectfully request allowance of each of the pending claims and issuance of a Notice of Allowance at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,
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